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File No. BK 3/16

TITLE: KUWAIT:

POLITICAL AFFAIRS (EXTERNAL):

PALESTINE.

[redacted]

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DEPT.	NAME	DATE	DEPT.	NAME	DATE	DEPT.	DATE
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B	AM	16/4		Di	9/5		
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E	Mr. Saunders	14/12	B		27/5		
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B	Mr Saunders	3/1	B	WHF	25/7		
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(16718)

BRITISH EMBASSY,

KUWAIT.

6 November, 1967.

18

Kuwait Press reaction to the 50th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration.

Al Talia of 1 November carried an article on the 50th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration in which it said that some voices had been raised calling for the pages of the Balfour declaration to be turned and for the anniversary of this declaration to be ignored. These voices are saying that the Britain of today is different from the Britain of yesterday, that George Brown is not Lord Balfour and that Harold Beeley is not Colonel Lawrence.

2. The article goes on to declare that Britain's history in the Arab World had been dreadful and that if the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. George Brown, had the historical courage (similar to that possessed by General de Gaulle) to depart from the long road of sin he had no alternative but to try to understand the Arab position objectively and far-sightedly. Mr. Wilson and Mr. Brown and others must understand that the future of Britain lies in cooperation with the Arabs. As a test of Britain's intentions the paper asks if she is ready to quit all Arab territories forthwith; to abandon her reactionary, separist plotting and her treacherous friends and if she is sorry for her Palestinian history which began in 1917. The article ends on the hopeful note that Britain has, with personalities like Mr. Brown, Lord Caradon, Sir Harold Beeley and others, a genuine opportunity to atone for its past mistakes and sins.

3. There has been no other comment on this subject apart from a Reuter report extracted from last Thursday's Times which the Daily News headlined "The Document of Perfidy is 50 Years Old". The remaining Kuwaiti newspapers have not yet had opportunity to publish their comments.

Yours ever

(R.D.Gordon)

A. Ibbott, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

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(10711)

RECEIVED IN FCO No. 5
29 NOV 1967
BK3/16

BRITISH EMBASSY,

KUWAIT.

26 November, 1967.

Dear Ibbott

P.L.O. and Fatah

The Palestine Liberation Organisation has never been much of a favourite with the Kuwait press, but during the last week there has been a spate of criticism of its activities, which have been compared unfavourably with those of Fatah. While the members of Fatah were sacrificing their lives, P.L.O. members received salaries, travelled in comfortable aircraft and stayed at luxury hotels; while Fatah made commando raids, the P.L.O.'s work consisted of nothing more than words and statements; and so on. In Al Rai al Amm's opinion, therefore, the P.L.O. was no longer qualified to deal with the current situation.

2. All this is symptomatic of a stiffening in the public attitude in Palestine, which has caused the press also to reject the British resolution in the Security Council as being no better than the American one "on a British plate", and to welcome Nasser's speech of 23 November and in particular his phrase "What has been taken by force cannot be returned except by force". Privately many Kuwaitis are more moderate, but the danger, as always, is that they become prisoners of their public attitudes.

Yours ever

(R. D. Gordon)

A. Ibbott, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

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RECEIVED IN
ARCHIVES No. 5
12 DEC 1967
BK3/16

BRITISH EMBASSY

KUWAIT

(10711)

10 December, 1967.

Dear Alec,

Palestine

It is perhaps indicative of the way people's minds here are working that three Kuwaiti weeklies this week call for force, and particularly for popular struggle, as the only way of regaining what has been lost. 'Al Hadaf' says that the Palestinian people are quite capable of regaining their homeland if only they are given money and arms. 'Saut al Khalij' says that the Arab people should help the Palestinians become commandos and then leave it to the Palestinians themselves. This thought was also expressed earlier in the week by 'al Rai al Amm', which of course has always been a strong supporter of the doctrine of fighting to the last drop of Palestinian blood. Indeed I had assumed cynically that this was probably the thought behind all these statements. However 'al Talia', some of whose supporters are in touch with the South Arabian N.L.F., says that the policy to be followed is now clearly that of "armed struggle of the masses, organised revolutionary violence, large scale popular resistance, and the escalation of popular war." This almost Maoist sentence is very much the Algerian line, I believe, and the success of the Algerians and the South Arabian N.L.F. in their own wars suggests that it might be possible to make something of a guerilla war on these lines in Palestine, if there is a body somewhere that is serious about it, although the Israelis would no doubt be very much more ruthless in their reaction. It would be interesting to know whether there is any other less speculative evidence that the Arabs are now seriously thinking of a war on the Vietnam model, a possibility they have so often talked about.

X

Yours ever

(J.A.N. Graham)

A. Ibbott, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

RESTRICTED

No but terrorism will increase

The Egyptians would like a war on some model, but realise that they have no hope at present of winning.

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1044

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 15
14 DEC 1967
BK3116

BRITISH EMBASSY,
KUWAIT.

6 December, 1967

Dear Michael,

I found the Kuwait Foreign Minister in a very grumpy mood about Palestine yesterday. He has now decided that he does not like the Security Council resolution at all. I did not quite gather why: he said the Arabs were like a football in a game between the great powers.

2. Sheikh Sabah said he was leaving for Cairo on 7 December to attend the meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers. He had no enthusiasm for the occasion, and he did not think he would be away this time for more than four or five days. He believed that the internal situation in Egypt was very bad. There was moreover trouble between Egypt and Libya over their frontier. The times were out of joint; but he was glad that we were about to re-open relations with Cairo.

3. I am sending a copy of this letter to Stewart Crawford.

Yours ever,

(G.G. Arthur)

M.S. Weir, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

We have no knowledge of any trouble, but there certainly has been plenty in the past. J.R.D. are in process of publishing a paper on Libyan frontier problems, including this one. I attach a memorandum produced by Tobin Dodds 18 months ago, a copy of which is in Tripoli. RA Keeley 22/12.

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RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 5
29 DEC 1967
BK 3|16

(10711)

BRITISH EMBASSY - - - -

KUWAIT

21 December, 1967.

My dear Alec,

PALESTINE

On his return from Cairo, the Kuwait Foreign Minister made a statement to the Kuwait daily 'al Rai al Amm' about Palestine, which received prominence in the B.B.C. World Service. Asked about the visit of Mr. Jarring to the Middle East, Shaikh Sabah al Ahmad said that if Mr. Jarring's visit was to discuss the British resolution "... I want to confirm that we regret this resolution and that we demand the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the Arab lands which they have occupied first and foremost." He went on that the Arab states had adopted a common line on this subject which they would make clear to the U.N. representative.

2. We have received no intimation from anyone in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of what Kuwait's private attitude to the U.K. resolution is but we do not think that Sabah al Ahmad's statement should be taken as meaning anything more than that Kuwait is loyally, if blindly, supporting the common line. At least one member of an influential Kuwaiti family has said to us "oh yes we reject your resolution, but we like it really." This may or may not be true of most Kuwaitis, but there have been some ironical articles in the press asking why the Arab states had to wait for President Nasser to reject the resolution, before saying that they also rejected it.

Yours ever

(J.A.N. Graham)

A. Ibbott, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

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M. Saunders
Eastern Dept.

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10711

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 5
4-JAN 1968
BK3/16

BRITISH EMBASSY,
KUWAIT.
30 December, 1967

Dear Richard,

You may have seen from John Graham's letter (10711) of 21 December to Ibbott that the Kuwait Foreign Minister now regrets the "British" resolution (I hope our authorship will gradually get less and less emphasis) on Palestine.

2. My Italian colleague has for some time been trying to see either the Foreign Minister or the Under Secretary in the Foreign Ministry to enquire about Kuwaiti attitudes on this matter. Both these gentlemen finally summoned him, with that exquisite lack of consideration in which the Kuwaitis sometimes excel, on Christmas Day. In an hour and a half the two between them gave him the full treatment. They apparently said, among other things:-

(a) that Kuwait did not accept the U.N. resolution;

(b) that Mr. Jarring could not but fail in his mission, and that success or failure was of no consequence to them;

(c) that Israel must withdraw from all the territories she had occupied before the Arabs would begin to think about talking of settlement;

(d) that Kuwait would never recognise Israel, whatever the other Arab states might do;

(e) that all the trouble in the Middle East was due to the vicious policies of the United States Government, who were pouring petrol on the fire;

(f) that if there were another round and the Israelis captured Cairo and Damascus, so be it: the Arabs would win, and the West would lose, in the end.

3. The Italian was astonished at the sustained virulence of the attack on the United States. I am not: the Kuwaitis are furious with the Americans at the moment, though they are fortunately not taking practical steps to demonstrate their anger. The Foreign Ministry have certainly hardened on Palestine since Sabah al Ahmed and his staff attended the meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers in Cairo earlier this month. But they are unlikely to have a serious influence on Arab counsels one way or the other, so it perhaps does not matter what they think so long as they do not express their thoughts in local action against the West. I

/have

M.S. Weir, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

have no doubt that many of them believe what they said to the Italian Ambassador, but I suspect they put on rather a special show for him. I never ask them about Palestine these days: it spoils the atmosphere for the conduct of other business.

Yours ever,

(G.G. Arthur)

(2/16)

BRITISH EMBASSY,

KUWAIT.

22 April, 1968

IN ARC No. 5

29/PER/1308

BK 3/16

11

Dear Alec,

P.L.O.

The Acting Head of the P.L.O., Mr. Yehya Hammoudah, was in Kuwait from 6 to 10 April. His visit was overshadowed by that of King Feisal, between 8 and 11 April; but he gave an interview to the Kuwaiti newspaper al-Siyasa on 9 April.

2. In it he said that he did not agree that action on the Palestine issue should be confined to Palestinians: commando activities should be supported by the Arab countries. He denied knowledge of the origin of al Fateh and said it might be true that it consisted of the Moslem Brotherhood and the Liberation Party. He also said that the funds raised as a result of the deduction of 5% of the salaries of Palestinians in Kuwait were and wouldbe for the P.L.O. In future, all Palestinians, not government officials and oil company employees as at present, would be expected to pay.

Yours sincerely,

David

(D.E.S. Blatherwick)

A. Ibbett, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

(5/13)

RECEIVED
ARCHIVES
13 MAY 1968
BK 3/16

BRITISH EMBASSY,

KUWAIT.

7 May, 1968

10

Dear Alec,

Kuwait Contributions to Palestinian Commando Activities

Al Rai al Amm of 29 April carried a news item that at the Council of Ministers meeting on 28 April, the Cabinet ordered that the 2% surcharge currently levied on cinema tickets and petrol sales for donation to the Algerian war effort should be made over to the Palestinian Commando effort - we think to the Fateh and not to the P.L.O.

2. The average of cinema takings amounts to about KD.50,000 a year. Petrol sales amounted to KD.4,260,000 (66 million imperial gallons) in 1966 and KD. 4,740,000 (79 million gallons) in 1967. Therefore this year the commandos might expect to get about KD.100,000 from this levy assuming that cinema takings remain about the same and that there is a slight increase in sales of petrol.

Yours sincerely,

David

(D.E.S. Blatherwick)

A. Ibbett, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

Copied to:
Chancery (Amman)
" (Beirut)

(5/13)
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FAWES No. 5
23 MAY 1968
BK 3/16

BRITISH EMBASSY,
KUWAIT.

9

21 May, 1968

Dear Alec,

Support for the Fida'iyin

On 18 May the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, Sd. Khalid al-Mudhaf, issued a ministerial decree providing that in future, all contributions for the war effort or for the Palestine Commandos should be channelled through the People's Committee for Collecting Contributions. Sd. Mudhaf said the purpose of the decree was to streamline collection and reduce wastage. This decree did not however affect al-Fath: that organisation, for which he and his colleagues had great admiration and enthusiasm, was free to collect contributions on its own behalf.

Yours sincerely,

(D.E.S. Blatherwick)

A. Ibbott, Es q.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

W10 6

Translation of the Speech made by H.H. The Prime Minister Shaikh Sabah al Ahmad at the Opening Ceremony of the Muwassat Hospital on 15.5.1968.

It is a great pleasure to me to be here today to celebrate the opening of the Muwassat Hospital, which represents a pioneering step by the private sector in the public health services in our beloved country.

The progress and prosperity of States are measured nowadays with the standard of the public services their governments provide the citizens in various fields, especially in that of health services. Kuwait has achieved a high standard in this field, which we can proudly compare with the highest standard in advanced States.

The State is eager to provide the public with all health services free of charge, but it welcomes at the same time, any individual or collective efforts to share in the undertaking of this noble task. It is natural to subject such participation to the control of the State in order to ensure a suitable level of services for the citizens and others and to keep this noble task remote from any possible exploitation, both as regards charges of medical treatment or prices of medicines.

We sincerely hope that those responsible for running this hospital will take into consideration the fact that this noble task does not aim at material gains so much as public service.

Also, whilst we appreciate the efforts made in the establishment of this hospital, we sincerely hope that these good endeavours will be at the disposal of the greatest possible number of citizens and others. who wish to benefit from them. We wish the hospital and its employees all success and prosperity.

Dear Brothers: In providing all services to its people, our State aims at building a strong and good citizen capable of becoming a pillar in the development and defence of his country.

Although we commemorate today the elapse of 20 years since the usurpation of Palestine by the Zionists and the iniquitous

/powers

powers supporting it, we take this painful memory as a springboard to renew our determination to liberate this Arab land. Days have proved that 15 May, 1948, was nothing but the beginning of an expansionist Zionist plan, extending beyond the frontiers of Palestine proper and aiming at the whole Arab entity.

And Kuwait, inspired by the belief of the ties of the common Arab fate and her realisation of her responsibility as an Arab State to shoulder her duties towards the Arab problem, has carried out before and after the aggression of 5 June her full duty within the limits her abilities permit. Also, we renew today our adherence to the resolutions of the 4th Arab Summit held at Khartoum and our determination to continue to fulfil all our commitments. To this intent and in order that all of us, both citizens and others, will have the honour of contributing to the struggle against the aggressive invaders, the government is to put forward the necessary legislation for imposing certain taxes, the proceeds of which will be allocated to strengthening the army and the air force and to supporting the Palestinian commando resistance in the occupied territory. The proceeds of these taxes, however meagre they may be, will make each one of us sense his sacred duty to contribute in the battle of honour, dignity and liberation.

We confirm our complete solidarity with our Arab Sister States in action for the removal of the effects of aggression and realise the necessity of the Arab States and their leaders to agree on the unity of our ranks and aims and in a spirit of loyal solidarity on planning the next stage.

We also hail and support the heroic resistance of the Arabs of Palestine in their just struggle against Zionist occupation and the restriction of their legal rights in their usurped land.

With the aid of God and our firm belief in a better tomorrow; with the aid of our just cause and our trust

/in our

in our Arabism and the abilities and experience events have given us: we hope that final victory shall be ours.

Unclassified. (10)

5

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ARCHIVES No. 5
23 MAY 1968
BK. 3/16

With the compliments of

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S

EMBASSY

Ref para 1 of my letter
5/13 of 21/5/68.

KUWAIT

TO:- A. IBBOTT ESQ
ARABIAN DEPT
F.O.

(2/16)

CONFIDENTIAL

3

BRITISH EMBASSY,
KUWAIT.
9 July, 1968.

R.C.E. IN
ARCHIVES No. 1
15 JUL 2000
BK 3 | 16

Rydeur Rec,

The Fatah

I learn from the Kuwait Oil Company that during the last six or seven weeks they have had a number of resignations, about seven in all, of Palestinian/Jordanian mechanical, electrical and telecommunications engineers. The declared motive of these men is their desire to join the Fatah. They go, according to my source in the Kuwait Oil Company, to Syria in the first instance and then on, perhaps to China, for training.

2. The story has also been current in Kuwait that Shaikh Fahad al Ahmad Al Sabah, a brother of the Prime Minister, who is an officer in the Kuwait Armed Forces, has been fighting with the feda'iyin in Jordan. The Kuwait Government, as we reported in Blatherwick's letter 5/13 of 7 May to Ibbott, have allocated the proceeds of the cinema and petrol taxes (about K.D.100,000 a year) to the Fatah and allow the latter's collectors to operate freely here. (An Assistant Under Secretary in the Ministry of Defence was reputed the other day to have handed over about K.D.800, the proceeds of a collection in the Ministry). It may be that Shaikh Fahad has been deputed to find out how this money is being used. It is clear, however, that the Kuwait Government are backing the Fatah. We cannot be sure whether their support is purely tactical or whether they are sincere. They can afford to make these public gestures, thus enhancing their reputation as good Arabs, without risk to themselves. But I think there is more to it than this: the Palestine issue rouses strong emotions here among the leading members of the Government and it is probable that their support for the Fatah springs also from conviction.

3. The same intransigence can be detected in the press where Mahmoud Riad's statement in Copenhagen, that the Arabs recognised the reality of the existence of Israel, was prominently reported. Al Siyasa on 5 July commented that this was another statement denying that the Arabs were out to abolish Israel: unless the

/Palestinian

A.J.D. Stirling, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

Palestinian revolution (i.e. Fatah) became an all-out revolt, Israel would achieve the secure borders she had always wanted and the idea of an Arab Palestine would be doomed. Al Nahda was less outspoken: after criticising the Russians for accepting the existence of Israel, it implied that the U.A.R. was adopting the same stand. Al Rai al-Amm wondered whether the Arabs were ready to make any further concessions. President Nasser's talks in Moscow whould centre on the extent to which Russia would support the Arabs in case of war: by implication, they should not be based on the assumption that Israel is one of the realities of the Middle East situation.

4. On a related topic, President Nasser's announced readiness to welcome back a U.N. peacekeeping force led to some fiery press comment on 8 July. Al Rai al-Amm blamed the Arab left-wing regimes for all the trouble that has befallen the Arabs: it looks back with nostalgia to the era of the Kings, who never gave up Arab rights. Al Siyasa was similarly critical and al Yaqza reiterated the line that what is taken by force can only be restored by force.

5. But the Kuwaiti press and government are of course in a somewhat privileged position over Palestine since they are not directly affected. They do not have to stop to think before speaking. Privately some Kuwaiti officials would take a more responsible line. For example Sami Shammas, no. 2 in Kuwait's U.N. Mission, who is here on leave, spoke approvingly of Riad's statement and when I protested that Nasser, who alone had the prestige to put such a line over, appeared to have disowned it, he explained that it was necessary for Nasser to proceed by means of "two steps forward, one back", using second rank men as front runners, if he was to retain his position and the confidence of the Arabs.

Yours ever

Edm

(J.A.N. Graham)

cc. Chanceries in
Beirut,
Tel Aviv,
Cairo,
Amman.

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(12)

BRITISH EMBASSY

KUWAIT

(2/16)

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVES No. 5
20 OCT 1968
BK 3/16

24 September, 1968.

Dear Alec,

Palestine Commandos

Mr. Yahya Hammoudah, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, is to arrive in Kuwait today for a three-day visit. He is to meet the Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister and Acting Amir, and the Minister of Defence. The local press has also reported that leaders of the other commando organisations will also be coming to Kuwait "next week" for similar discussions. In an interview with al Rai al Amm published on 23 September the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Sabah al Ahmad, said that his purpose during the talks would be to bring about the unity of the commando movement.

Yours sincerely,

David

(D.E.S. Blatherwick)

A. Ibbott, Esq.,
Arabian Department,
Foreign Office.

c.c. J.L.Y. Sanders, Esq.,
Beirut.

J.A. Shepherd, Esq.,
Amman.

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